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# Our long-term strategy to 2040

**Tū Mai Rā, Toi Aotearoa**

Adapted in 2026 by Accessible Formats Service,  
Blind Low Vision NZ, Auckland.

**Transcriber's Note: TN:** Logo for Creative New Zealand featuring a gold spiral icon, the word “creative” in black, and “NZ” in gold script above the text “Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa.”

# Our long-term strategy to 2040

## Tipoka, Summary

We are **Creative New Zealand Toi Aotearoa**, the national arts development agency of Aotearoa New Zealand.

*Tū Mai Rā, Toi Aotearoa* is our long-term strategy, setting out te haerenga, our journey, to 2040.

Te wāheke, our future, is rich with potential: a journey that's always evolving as we move forward.

## Moemoeā, Our vision

Our vision reflects our ambitions for the arts and ngā toi Māori out to 2040, that:

**The arts and ngā toi Māori are flourishing: created by a thriving arts community, enriching lives here and around the world.**

In pursuing this vision, we give effect to te pūtake, our purpose—"to encourage, promote and support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders".

# **Ngā aronga, Our goals**

We'll reach our vision by achieving our long-term goals. These serve as a bridge between where we are now and where we want to be by 2040.

Our goals respond to our current context and where we see things heading. They are interconnected and will often link with and contribute to other work being achieved.

**Empowered communities, of all kinds, making decisions on the arts and ngā toi Māori closest to them.**

For the first stage of our journey, our priorities are:

- developing and implementing our approach to empowering communities to make decisions about the arts and ngā toi
- strengthening the infrastructure needed for community-led decision-making.

**Thriving artists, ringatoi and practitioners, with viable creative careers, supported by a strong arts infrastructure.**

*For the first stage of our journey, our priorities are:*

- strengthening the arts and ngā toi ecosystem by supporting creative enterprises, building capability,

and supporting professional and leadership development

- leveraging our role as a Crown investor to build relationships with a broader range of supporters, within Aotearoa New Zealand (eg, government, community funders, business, iwi and hapū) and globally, to grow the resource base
- growing markets and opportunities for artists, ringatoi, practitioners and organisations, locally, nationally and globally.

**He mana toi, he mana tangata, ngā toi Māori and ringatoi Māori are visible everywhere and highly valued as part of the distinct identity of Aotearoa, which is admired globally.**

*For the first stage of our journey, our priorities are:*

- Mana ōrite: working to achieve equitable outcomes for Māori in how we invest in and work for the arts and ngā toi
- Hononga: maintaining and developing strong relationships with tangata whenua, mātanga, ringatoi, Māori-led arts organisations, marae, hapū and iwi, to support and protect ngā toi as a taonga for future generations

- Tautīnei: developing the infrastructure and leadership to enable ngā toi to flourish in Aotearoa New Zealand and globally.

***Powerful and resilient Pacific arts, led by enterprising and innovative Pasifika people, for Aotearoa, Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa and the world.***

*For the first stage of our journey, our priorities are:*

- investing in Pacific arts to be bold and enterprising
- supporting Pacific arts to be powerfully connected through resilient ecosystems of creative communities
- supporting Pacific arts to inspire and influence people everywhere

***Inspired New Zealanders, embracing the arts and ngā toi Māori every day.***

*For the first stage of our journey, our priorities are:*

- shifting attitudes about the arts and ngā toi towards becoming more positive, and deepening engagement, including through storytelling that celebrates our unique arts and ngā toi
- building the arts community's capability to advocate on its own behalf and encouraging greater investment and engagement

- improving access to the arts and ngā toi, reducing barriers and building an inclusive environment for the arts in Aotearoa New Zealand.

## ***A valued arts development agency, leading with impact and delivering for Aotearoa New Zealand.***

*For the first stage of our journey, our priorities are:*

- ensuring we're optimally organised to achieve our long-term goals, respond to change and implement our Te Kaupapa o Toi Aotearoa principles across our work
- working across the arts ecosystem to add value beyond funding—providing leadership and influencing the system to bring about the change we seek
- ensuring our systems support streamlined, accessible, people-centric processes, internally and externally.

## **Toi Aotearoa, Our organisation**

Our organisation is powered by people with different skills and experiences coming together to carry out our work and achieve our goals. We think of Creative New Zealand as a waka hourua, a traditional double-hulled sailing vessel used to navigate great distances.

In the waka hourua, both hulls are essential – each has equal standing and is bound to the other, and there's much

to be gained from exploring our differences in the papa noho (the space between hulls). This also applies to how we work with others; recognising our different perspectives and approaches but working together to reach the best outcomes for all.

## **Ngā tāngata, our people**

Our people guide our work. They have a deep commitment to the arts and ngā toi Māori, and to making a meaningful difference to people's lives.

## **Our values, ngā whanonga pono**

Our values reflect how we work—with each other, with the arts community and beyond.

- **Āwhinatia, Strengthen and support:** We're inclusive and supportive, we're responsible and accountable for the things we do, and we act with integrity.
- **Honotia, Connect and grow:** We foster a culture of collaboration, respect and connection, with each other and those we work with.
- **Māiatia, Have courage and confidence:** We stand tall, strive for excellence and embrace the future with optimism.

## Ngā mahi, our work

Our work directly supports the arts community. As the national arts development agency, we're part of this community too. Since 1994, we've invested over \$1.6 billion, helping our artistic, cultural and creative landscape to flourish.

The resources we have determine what we're able to achieve. Around three-quarters of our public funding comes from the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board Te Puna Tahua, with the rest coming from government.

New Zealanders support public funding of the arts and ngā toi Māori, and this support is growing over time.

## Te huarahi, our approach

Consistent with the waka hourua, we embrace a 'by, with and for' approach, involving the arts community and others in our policy, programme design and decision-making work. This supports our aim of empowering communities to determine their own futures—**tuku rauemi** (handing over resources).

A reciprocal approach lifts the impact of our work and is more rewarding for us and the arts community—**mana aki i te tangata** (lifting up the mana of the people). In this spirit, we uphold the mana of Te Tiriti o Waitangi—**whakamana i Te Tiriti**. We see Te Tiriti as a

foundation for all people who call Aotearoa New Zealand home—tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti—and as a Te Tiriti implementing organisation, it's central to the way we work and what we do.

Our Act sets out the principles we operate under. Along with **recognising in the arts the role of Māori as tangata whenua**, we **recognise Pacific arts** ('the arts of the Pacific Island peoples of New Zealand') and the **cultural diversity of the people of New Zealand**. Our Act also has principles around **participation, access, excellence and innovation, professionalism, and advocacy**.

## **Ngā tūāpapa, Our foundations**

Ngā tūāpapa, our foundations, are strong and enduring, giving us the mandate to do what we do.

*Our whakapapa* dates back to 1964 and our establishment as the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council.

## **Te pūtake, Our purpose**

Our purpose is set out in the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa Act 2014. We're here to:

**Encourage, promote and support the arts in New Zealand for the benefit of all New Zealanders.**

**To encourage, promote and support:** These words span the range of our work, helping the arts and ngā toi Māori,

artists, ringatoi and practitioners, and arts communities thrive.

**... the arts in New Zealand:** Under our Act, "the arts" includes all forms of creative and interpretative expression. In our work, we often talk about the arts in terms of the artforms and genres we're able to support, including craft and object art, dance, literature, multidisciplinary arts, music and opera, theatre, and visual arts. We also use broader terms like ngā toi Māori, Pacific arts and the arts of the diverse cultures of New Zealand.

The arts are always changing, and traditional definitions and boundaries continue to shift. Arts, culture, creativity and ngā toi will no doubt be as exciting and distinct in 2040 as they are to those of today.

**... for the benefit of all New Zealanders:** The arts and ngā toi bring a wide range of benefits to people's lives—from the benefits to those who create and present the arts, through to those who engage with and appreciate the arts. These include boosting physical and mental wellbeing, connecting whānau and communities, growing careers and the economy, and building our identity and global reputation.

**To read the full strategy, visit**  
[www.creativenz.govt.nz/tumaira](http://www.creativenz.govt.nz/tumaira)

# **Tū Mai Rā, Toi Aotearoa**

Tū mai rā, Toi Aotearoa

ki te ao hurihuri,

hahana atu,

whakaniko tōku whare kōrero.

Ko Tāne manahau

i te kete aronui,

whātoro te whanaketanga

ki te hononga tīpuna.

Uruuru ki te māiatanga

mō ngā hāpori,

whakamaui, whakamaui kia tina

i ngā whakaritenga,

te āwhina me te akina,

ki te hononga, hononga whenua.

Stand proudly, Toi Aotearoa

in this ever-changing world,

blaze the pathway,

beautify my house of dialogue.

Tane the resilient

brought about responsibility,

extended are the arms of development

to the past.

Enter into the potential

of the communities,

maintain the balance,

through support and advocacy,

keeping us anchored to Papatūānuku.

Our waiata—*Tū Mai Rā, Toi Aotearoa*—was composed by Arts Council member Kura Moeahu in 2019. Its mātauranga invites us to stand tall and embrace what lies ahead. It's the name of this strategy, which covers our journey to 2040.

**End of Our long-term strategy to 2040**